classical architects generally? The solemn grandeur and repose of the Greek temple has to me long marked it out as a fit model as regards its exterior, on which the religious structures of the day should be framed,—as a true and enduring type of sacred architecture. Christianity, if I rightly understand it, would find in Greek columnar architecture the completest and sublimest expression possible to the art. If classic architecture be applied at all, in any of its modifications, to this purpose, it is the peripteral or temple style that should be aimed at; and if this, i. e. pure detached columnar architecture, be not fit, no other form of classic architecture, no Palladian or Italian corruption of it, is so. I look upon the Greek temple as "an apotheosis in stone:" its conception sprang from the religious feeling, the devout contemplation of the Supreme and Eternal, and was to enshrine the idea of God in all the glory and beauty of which architecture is susceptible. Framed upon such model, the church of the day would, I consider, by its grand architectural qualities alone, and independently of all sculptural illustration, by striking those chords that vibrate in unison in the hearts of all men, declare itself none other than the "House of God;" and we should henceforth have a truly catholic style, in which each denomination of Christians might, according to its peculiar rite, erect its shrine to the common Lord.*

As to the horizontal spirit of Greek architecture, why should that be excluded from ecclesiastical design? Why should all point upwards, as if earth were not? The symbolism of verticality has been overrated, or too exclusively aimed at. Religion has reference to earth as well as to heaven, and there is that in it which may be aptly symbolized by the sublime repose of the Greek architecture, which is as applicable as the aspiration of the Gothic. If the one directs to heaven, the other says, "Peace on earth;" and the Christian temple, transfused with the horizontal spirit, would very fitly be an object of peaceful repose and relief to the eye from the necessarily broken and picturesque line and forms presented by the domestic and secular buildings around.

But the Greek temple, says some objector, was raised to a false worship, and breathes of that worship. Architecture, it might be replied, can go no farther than an embodiment of religion in the abstract; and the Greek temple reached the ultimatum of this expression, and is quite independent, therefore, of Paganism for its effect. "The temple," says Schiller, "remained holy to the eyes long after the gods had served for laughter;" and it is, I would add, holy still: the fane of Minerva is as sacred in the eye of taste to-day as it was to the blindest worshipper of the goddess. The Greek and Roman deities, it should be remembered, were the fountains and dispensers of life, wisdom, and immortality, and their earthly abodes were, in their artistic expression, to excite emotions such as might co-exist with the contemplation of universal dominion, eternity of duration, almighty power, infinite knowledge,—attributes which, though ascribed to whatever creatures of the imagination, belong to the one true God,

"Jehovah, Jove, or Lord,"

and forming the highest theme that could be rendered in stone, would require the highest qualities of art for its expression.

Let us not suppose that art was in its origin a mere ceremonial adjunct to idolatrous rites, an extraneous addition of splendour, subservient to the wiles of priestcraft: as such neither the statues nor the shrines of the gods could have been produced. The essential nature of art lies in its spirituality of apprehension; and its true manifestation can only be wrought out in integrity of heart, in independence of soul. It may be—it is—fallible through the weakness of the finite intellect, but it is never false through its wickedness; and though the highest works of art have been, and may be, degraded to the most false and grovelling uses, it is as impossible for the artist, with a true purpose of mind or craving, so produce such works, as it would be for him to reverse the law of gravitation, and cause the grosser elements to supersede the more ethereal.

Among other recommendations presented by that peripteral disposition I am recommending, is its adaptiveness to the simplest forms. The character of the Greek temple may be had without its entailing the necessity for any expletive or obsolete feature. But though adapted to the simplest arrangement, it may be applied to the more complex. The feature that gives the Greek temple its perfection as a work of art, viz. the peristyle, is admissible without mutilation into the Christian temple, whatever its external form, though the simplicity of the general outline of the Greek temple should not be lost sight of; and though the porticoes may be useful as covered ambulatories, and as such have an air of welcome and protection very appropriate to their place, yet I plead for this peripteral distribution of columns chiefly on account of its simplicity, entirety, and completeness, qualities certainly in harmony with the spirit and tendency of Christianity. The Greek temple, the most pure and perfect architectural work ever evolved from the art-spirit of man, is, I think, worthy of thus standing as a type for the Christian sanctuary. Simplicity, and grandeur, and beauty—independence on outward ornament, are characteristic of genuine Christianity, and these are the distinguishing features also of Greek architecture. A chaste beauty, a noble simplicity, unaffected purity, and truth, are proper art-qualities to associate with Christian worship; and in no style can these excellences reign in such perfection as in the architecture of the Greeks;—I say in the architecture of the Greeks, for it is emphatically the architecture of proportion, which is its distinguishing principle, "the stamen which they drew out into one immense connected web;" and being the perfection of proportion it is less dependant than any other upon decoration,—the most unadorned of beautiful architecture,—the most beautiful of unadorned construction.

The rejection by the first Christians of the ancient temple which was before their eyes affords no presumption of its unfitness. Their preference of the Basilica as the model of their churches must be attributed to other causes. There was nothing in the spirit of Christianity nor in the material requirements of its worship that forbade the exterior colonnade, or called for so perverse a rejection of classic beauty as their first basilical churches evinced. It was not inevitable that the portico of the Pagan edifice was not admitted into Christian architecture. I cannot consider the discarding of the entablature as a necessary and inevitable consequence of the new spirit of Christianity, but as being the fruit of the accidental meeting of that spirit with a deprared taste in the art among the Romans. Had there existed at the time sufficient purity of artistic feeling to have regulated the religious zeal, which was undiscriminating against all that was Pagan, the antique architecture had been adopted by the church builders in another manner. Had Christianity become the religion of the empire two or three centuries sooner,—in the reign of Augustus instead of Constantine, while Greek genius was yet potent,—had the new art sprung up amid the prosperity and glory, instead of the degradation of the empire,—very different, I suspect, had been the character of our Christian and mediæval architecture generally. In short, it is impossible to conjecture to what height of glory and excellence the art, formed from a pure type, germinating from a healthy root, and re-animated by Christianity, might not at this time have attained. If the temple was associated with the idolatry so much hated, and a return to which was so much dreaded by the first Christians, so were the architectural elements and materials which they hesitated not to use. They worshipped in structures erected with the spoils of heathenism: would artistic arrangement of these elements, their consonant devotion to the beautiful, have polluted their sanctuary or marred their rites? Would it not, on the contrary, have been the best apology for using them? Certainly we, with our better and broader view of art, can make a more refined use and wider application of the temple ordonnance; for what but the most inartistic conjunction of corrupted details was the composition of the church basilica? Its front exemplifies a complete perversion of all classic principle in the use of classic architecture; an adoption of the most elements, and a suppression of the best; and the side of the building is either a dead wall, or a wall relieved only by superficial features, blank arches, and a break which is neither pilaster nor buttress; while the open timber roof, exposing the common straight-lined supporting principals, has, as indeed it must ever have, however gorgeously painted, a rude and barn-like appearance. Surely reproduction of the hybrid temples of Constantine, though in a later and somewhat purer dress, is unworthy the talents of a great architect of the present day. We pay but a poor compliment to Christianity when we enshrine its worship in corrupt styles, or rather transitory manners and fashions, and associate it with barbarism in art.

It cannot be pleaded that it was an awakened desire for a new structural principle that inspired the change, and that here was the first and latest rise of the Gothic style, however the change effected by the Constantinal architects may have ultimately led to it; for though the entablature was banished, the horizontal principle was not rejected, and the continuous cornice of the ancient temple retained its place above the arches, and elsewhere, both in the exterior and interior.

The temple, it is true, presented no guide to the first builders as regards their interior distribution, which, with them, was the only, or at least the chief consideration; while the antique basilicæ were well lighted, and required but little modification. And if the assertion of an Italian writer be true, that the first churches were considered as tribunals where the bishops administered penance to the guilty and the eucharist to the absolved, such destination of them may have been an additional reason for the choice of a tribunal of justice as their model or type.

There can, however, be no doubt that these temple grandeurs were eschewed chiefly because they appeared a part of the Pagan worship, and essential to its pomps; and it was, perhaps, prudent to make the new temple differ in its general character from the old: but the mere fact that the temple ordonnance was an issue of the human imagination under the sway of Paganism should not prejudice or exclude it now, if its intrinsic qualities do not unfit it for the sacred uses of the day. The self-centred mind that observes and reflects free from the theoretical entanglement of art schools, and unawed by the absolutism of conventional criticism, would allow no influence to such considerations. As to associations of Paganism, temple architecture has lain quarantine long enough; and centuries of neglect and spoliation ought to have purged it from these. What the mind I have just described would deem it necessary to do, and what we have to endeavour, is dispassionately to consider how far the sentiment it awakens is consonant with that of Christianity,—what the latter enjoins and what it prohibits. Is there anything, it might be asked, in the Christian code that commanded arches to usurp the entablature? Is theological truth opposed to architectural truth? The beauty of holiness to the beauty of art? Is the destruction of the poetic a part of the mission of the Gospel? Greek temple architecture has been too flippantly spoken and disposed of: it has been narrowly and superficially judged: a deeper and broader insight would show us that it has a catholic meaning and use that renders it a denizen of every age. To me it has always worn the aspect of entire modernness, and yielded the correct and permanent expression of religion.

Nor were the further deviations from the temple style by the subsequent modifications of the Basilica more essential than the rest. The desire to give the form of the cross, and the further desire to decorate the intersection of its two limbs,—neither of which was necessary in

* As we have said before, it is not to be understood that we necessarily agree in all the views set forth in our pages.

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